

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 11/22/2016	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe/ 781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ____) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u>3/11/14, 4/8/14, 5/6/14, 6/3/14, 6/17/14, 7/15/14, 8/12/14, 9/9/14, 10/7/14, 11/4/14, 12/2/14, 12/16/14, 1/6/15, 2/3/15, 2/24/15, 3/24/15, 4/21/15, 5/19/15, 6/16/15, 7/14/15, 8/11/15, 9/1/15, 9/22/15, 10/20/15, 11/17/15, 12/15/15, 1/12/16, 2/9/16, 3/8/16, 4/5/16, 4/19/16, 5/17/16, 6/7/16, 6/21/16, 7/19/16, 8/16/16, 9/13/16, 10/4/16, 11/1/16</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW This item was prepared by the Administrative Office.			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts.			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe/ 781-5011

DATE:

SUBJECT: Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

DISCUSSION

Background

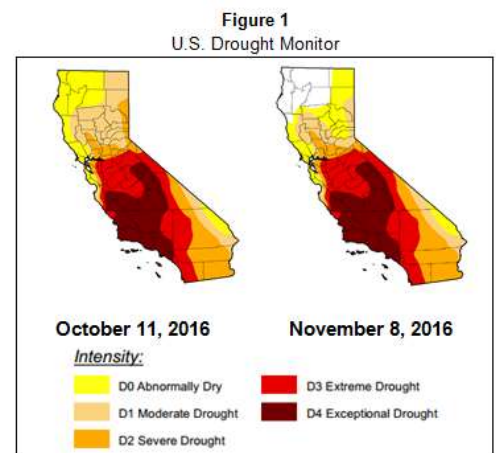
On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated. The Board also directed staff to return every 30 days to provide an update on the status of actions by the Drought Task Force, including a report on the analysis regarding local water conditions, local responses, conservation and outreach projects, and the State Water Project.

The last drought update was on November 1, 2016. Previous thirty-day updates are available at the following link: http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/Drought_Update/County_Drought_Updates.htm

The Drought Task Force continues to meet regularly to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach. The Drought Task Force prepared the Monthly Drought Update (Attachment 1) to inform the Board on current drought conditions and related management actions. Current drought conditions confirm the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Provided below is a summary of the current conditions and conservation and response efforts.

Current Conditions

Much of the state remains in a severe drought or worse. The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released November 10, 2016, indicates the majority of San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 2). Approximately 60% of California is at a level D2 Severe Drought or worse with 21% of the state at a D4 intensity level. Figure 1 shows how the intensity levels throughout the state have changed since the last update.



The percentage rainfall throughout the County for the 2016-17 water year (July 2016-June 2017) currently ranges from 7 to 13% of average (Attachment 3). Reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity including: Nacimiento 24% (92,275 acre feet); Whale Rock 32% (12,369 acre feet); Lopez 23% (11,309 acre feet); and Salinas 10% (2,267 acre feet) of capacity (Attachment 4).

Outlook

The U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook, valid for October 20 – January 31, indicates shows most of the Central Coast still in exceptional drought, which is likely to persist and long-term impacts (ground water, reservoir supplies, etc.) will remain. According to the Climate Prediction Center, there is now about a 70 percent chance of a La Niña developing during the Northern Hemisphere fall 2016, which is slightly favored to persist (about 55 percent) during winter 2016-17. Although development and intensification of drought becomes less likely as temperatures and evapotranspiration decrease during the fall, persistence is favored across the long-term drought areas such as California.

Impacts

Agricultural Conditions

Agricultural producers are continuing to watch the development of precipitation models for early fall and winter on the Central Coast. UC Cooperative Extension Advisors Royce Larsen and Mark Battany recently completed the 2016 Forage Production Update. They found that the unusual rains in July 2015 initiated germination, which normally begins in late September or October. However, there was no sustained rainfall, so all the annuals that did germinate at that time perished. The second germination this year began in November 2015. The interactions of rainfall, in connection with the many local variations in topography, aspect, and soil produced great variation in usable forage across the county. As a whole, by averaging all plots within each area (coastal, central and eastern zones) of the county, this year's production was near the long term average, Figure 2. All areas within the county had significantly more forage than the last two years.

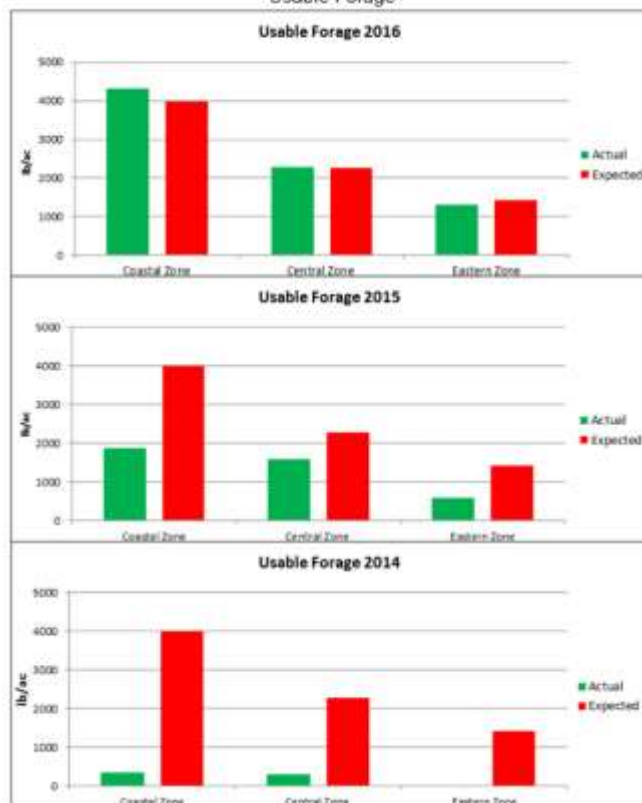
Fire Conditions

In 2016 to date, statewide statistics for CAL FIRE incidents indicate over 5,585 fires across State jurisdiction, burning 147,318 acres, which is 52% less than one year ago. Combined with USFS jurisdiction, 6,883 fires have burned 563,411 acres.

Chief Jalbert lifted the burn ban effective allowing agricultural and prescribed burning to be conducted in accordance with a CAL FIRE burn permit. Several prescribed burns are being prepared, primarily on State Parks lands along the north coast. CAL FIRE successfully conducted the Lewis #4 prescribed burn near La Panza Fire Station October 13-15. Approximately 450 acres were burned to reduce fire hazard and improved the range. Backyard burning is still closed pending additional rainfall adequate to end fire season.

The drought across the state is about to enter its 5th year and the effect on vegetation has been severe. All fuel types will burn readily during hot or windy periods until seasonal rains arrive. Expect aggressive fire behavior that will be highly resistant to suppressive actions – even during periods of weather not normally associated with fire growth. Above normal large fire potential is expected through the Fall. When combined with other factors influencing the fire environment such as wind, steep topography, and low fuel moisture levels, hot temperatures and low RH can significantly increase the fire danger by increasing fire initiation, spread rates, burning intensity, and difficulty of control. Despite some current cooling due to fall weather, the weather trend seems to be warm and dry, which favors a continuing fire season.

Figure 2
Usable Forage



Economic Conditions

The County continues to identify assistance programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions. Information regarding drought assistance for rural homeowners has been placed on the County Drought Conditions and Water Conservation webpage. Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), delivers a number of programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions.

The Governor's Drought Task Force created an online intake form for local, state, or tribal and federal agencies to document domestic water issues. The information is intended to inform and coordinate state response and mitigate drought impacts. Both agencies and individuals can complete the reporting form. Individuals with domestic water issues are encouraged to contact County Environmental Health at (805) 781-5544 or visit the state online reporting website at <https://mydrywatersupply.water.ca.gov/report/>.

County Facilities Usage and Conservation Actions

Water Conservation

Water usage data for all facilities with water billing from a vendor has been entered into the Utility Manager system. Water usage status updates for the users in the Utility Manager system and the County Operations Center show a 28% reduction countywide in water usage in July 2016 from July 2013.

Emergency Response Planning and Emergency Actions

County Office of Emergency Services (OES)

County of San Luis Obispo OES continues to coordinate with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to provide updates on the drought situation, respond to specific information requests to Cal OES, and coordinate local emergency needs. County OES continues to participate in the statewide drought conference calls hosted by Cal OES. Specifically, County OES continues communicate the severity of tree mortality located in the county.

County staff has also been coordinating with local CAL FIRE, Cambria Community Services District, and the Fire Safe Council on issues related to tree mortality, particularly in the Cambria area.

Contingency Planning

County Public Health, the Public Works Department, and CAL FIRE/County Fire continue to develop plans to ensure there is adequate supply of water for firefighting and domestic water use in the event that a community does not have enough water. Water availability information from public water systems has been categorized into three categories; Watch, Vulnerable, and Critical. The information has been placed into a GIS mapping layer for contingency planning. These maps are available on all the County Fire Departments mobile data computers. During a fire, the fire commanders can use these maps to identify which water sources are reliable and draw down systems that are vulnerable.

Emergency Actions

The proclamation continues to provide authority for unforeseen needed actions. As also noted, proclamation provides a statement to State and Federal agencies of the seriousness of the County's situation.

The County has taken no new emergency actions specific to the drought in this reporting period.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board review and receive the attached update. The update highlights the existence of continuing drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Review of this update by the Board fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary.

Note: Any regulations issued because of the local drought emergency would be subject to Board approval. The local emergency proclamation adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a County Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: the Administrative Office, Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, County Parks and Recreation, County Fire (CAL FIRE), Agricultural Commissioner, Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, Health Agency, County Counsel, and First District Supervisor Frank Mecham. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in regular contact with Cal OES to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with local water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant State agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track drought-related costs. As of November 8, 2016, tracked labor costs associated with the drought total \$402,835.

RESULTS

Accepting the update prepared by the Drought Task Force, which establishes the existence of conditions of drought, confirms the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update from the Drought Task Force confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the County and State.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 – Monthly Drought Update
2. Attachment 2 – U.S. Drought Monitor Map
3. Attachment 3 – Rainfall and Reservoir Data
4. Attachment 4 – Local Reservoir Conditions
5. Attachment 5 – U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook